

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING****Monday, December 10, 2001**

Present: June Bailey, Glen Dey, Janet Miller, M.S. Mitchell, Trix Niernberger, and Joe Todd

Also Present: Madison West – Old Cowtown Museum; Tonia Fairbanks - Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department; Leah Hoffman, Janice McKinney, Doug Kupper and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Mitchell called the meeting to order at approximately 3:35 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 5, 2001, were reviewed and approved as revised.

1. **Review and approval of Ten-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Proposal.**

Director Kupper referred board members to correspondence dated 11/28/01, subject: Proposed 2002-2011 CIP. He commented that the City has programmed approximately \$48 million dollars into Park and Recreation projects over then next ten years. He reviewed the Park and Recreation portion of the document, which listed projects by Council District, GO Funds, Total Funds and Construction Year. He briefly mentioned that repair and renovation of park roads and parking lots would be a priority, along with signage and landscaping around park and recreation facility entrances. He asked if board members had any specific concerns.

Niernberger asked about additional maintenance monies? Director Kupper responded that staff had built a number of elements into the ten-year plan that would address maintenance needs. He commented that as new facilities come on line, additional maintenance dollars would be added to the operating budget. He specifically mentioned construction of four more softball fields at South Lakes Park. Bailey asked about land acquisition funds. Director Kupper commented that \$3.5 million had been programmed over the ten-year period, which equated to approximately \$350,000 per year. He said in addition to those funds, the Department would also pursue Land and Water Conservation Funds and other public and private grant opportunities. Miller requested clarification on the Riverside Park System. Director Kupper explained that one half of the project has been initiated and that the \$2 million listed reflected the remaining portion of the project.

On motion by Bailey, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to receive and file the proposal.

2. **Discussion of Request for Cell tower at Chisholm Creek Park.** Director Kupper referred board members to an aerial map of Chisholm Creek Park. He explained that no specific site had been identified for location of the 135-foot, monopole tower; however, he added that several radio towers were already located west of the park off of 29th Street. Dey asked

about the area the tower would cover. Director Kupper responded that staff had no information on parameters at this time. He commented that installation of the tower at Herman Hill Park was complete and had gone smoothly. He said the developer had provided a privacy fence and plant screening around the base of the tower.

There was discussion regarding possible tower location including adjacent to the City owned farmhouse along Oliver, the Pioneer Balloon facility, the YMCA facility on Woodlawn and Home Depot on Woodlawn. Niernberger asked about the effect of a tower on the park's wildlife. Director Kupper commented that Great Plains Nature Center staff was opposed to installation of the tower from a naturalist's standpoint. Miller expressed concern that it was not a good site since there were so few natural areas left in the City. She said \$700 a month rental fee was a mere pittance compared to the money the telecommunications companies were making. She commented that she felt the department should be getting something for the park. Todd said he was concerned that in the future the telecommunications companies would constantly be coming to the City to request construction of cell towers in parks and that he would hate to see park land over run with them. Miller agreed that cell tower requests would probably become more frequent.

On motion by Niernberger, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to recommend that Chisholm Creek Park not be considered for location of a cell tower due to the natural aspect of the park.

3. **Suggested Distribution of Omnisphere Exhibits.** Janice McKinney, Program Development Coordinator, referred board members to a handout entitled "Requests for Omnisphere Exhibits and Equipment", which listed equipment/exhibits and the names of organizations and recreation centers who had requested them. She commented that a previous decision had been made to give USD 259 first option on all exhibits and equipment. There was discussion concerning various items.

On motion by Todd, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to support the plan for disposal of Omnisphere assets.

4. **Discussion of Land Dedication along the Wichita-Valley Center Floodway.** Leah Hoffman, Superintendent of Park and Recreation, referred board members to a map of the proposed dedication which was located along the Wichita-Valley Center Floodway, south of MacArthur bounded by Hoover on the west, and 47th St. South on the South. She said the developer proposed deeding the property to the City for open green space. She reviewed the 25-acre parcel stating that an abandoned railroad track ran north to south along the east portion of the property, along with utility lines. She added that several ponds also existed on the property.

President Mitchell reported that the developer had agreed to plant the 25 acres into Brome grass and mow it for hay for five or six years, or until the City decided to develop and maintain the property. He added that the developer would be developing the residential area directly west and adjacent to the proposed dedication in several phases, which would take approximately five to six years to complete. In addition, Mitchell briefly mentioned possible acquisition of an 80-acre parcel west of the proposed dedication.

Director Kupper commented that the parcel was located in an area of the City that was underserved by parks and recreation and that it was an opportunity to obtain 25 acres free which would be maintained for five to six years. There was brief discussion concerning possible development including a bicycle path and a small playground. It was noted that there were two access points onto the property at 43rd St. South and 47th Street South. Miller asked about the developer's motivation. President Mitchell commented that donation of the property to the City for park and recreation purposes was a tax right off. In addition, Fairbanks reported that the Planning Department had requested public access to the property for an easement. Bailey asked if there were any problems with the parcel, in terms of ground water contamination, etc. Staff responded no. Bailey commented that she felt this was a good signal to developers. That they could not continue to build homes without providing places for children to play.

On motion by Bailey, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to recommend that the City accept the land donation.

5. **Discussion of Adopt-A-Park Format.** Leah Hoffman, Superintendent of Park and Recreation, referred board members to a copy of the "Adopt-A-Park" Program Agreement. She said the program was designed to allow individuals, companies and other organizations to adopt park areas to perform litter pick up, mowing, weeding, fertilizing, and various other maintenance tasks. She said it was a one-year agreement that could be renewed annually and that it could be of tremendous assistance to park staff.

Director Kupper said this program was follow-up to the City's anti-litter campaign. He added that Park Staff had successfully negotiated care of all the medians on Maple, west of 119th St. with various homeowner associations.

There was discussion concerning licensing requirements, use of chemicals, and training. Hoffman indicated that staff would be providing information and guidance to the various groups as well as performing inspections of adopted areas on a regular basis. Dey suggested the agreement be reworded to indicate under *B – Services* that "circled items must be done by participant".

There was discussion of the "Adopt-A-Greenway" Program sponsored by the Greenways Commission. McKinney briefly reviewed the program stating that it was a 3-year commitment and that groups signed up to perform various maintenance functions (mostly litter pick up along the river) on a regular basis. She added that the program was very successful and that currently twenty-five groups were participating.

On motion by Niernberger, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to support the proposed "Adopt-A-Park" Program.

6. **Staff Recommendations for Fee Changes.** Director Kupper referred board members to two handouts, which represented staff recommendations for fee changes beginning in 2002. He reviewed the "Special Event Fee Amenity Proposal" which included special event fees, portable stage fee, portable bleachers fee, clean as you go crew fee, picnic table rental, barricade rental and various recreation equipment rentals.

Miller commented that the picnic table rental fee of \$60 appeared to be a “nuisance fee” that many individuals and groups could not afford. Bailey agreed and suggested a graduated scale depending on the number of tables the group wanted moved.

On motion by Bailey, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to support the proposed “Special Event Fee and Amenity” schedule, and receive and file.

Director Kupper referred board members to the second handout that consisted of facility rental fees, recreation center fees, open picnic shelters, baseball – softball – soccer and football field rental fees and various league fees

On motion by Bailey, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to support the proposed facility, athletic field and league fee schedule, and receive and file.

Off-the-Agenda Item

Madison West, re-enactor at Old Cow Town Museum, commented that he had seen an architect’s sketch of the proposed expansion of Botanica west to the river. He commented that he was concerned about the future of Cowtown as an historical museum of the old west. He stated that he felt Cowtown was one of the best draws to the City for national and international visitors and that it was worth care and future investment. He mentioned the Tall Grass Prairie Park and how Cowtown fit in with that American Cowboy theme. He requested the Park Board’s support to adequately fund and develop Cowtown to its full potential.

7. **Director’s Update.** Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:

- Grove Park - work has been sent to bid.
- Fairmount Park - design/build of the enclosed shelter is on schedule.
- Riverside System Master Plan - Design Council has reviewed some art pieces and engineering drawings and architectural drawings are being completed. Miller asked when the Board would see the final plan? Director Kupper responded in July or August of next year.
- Claude Lambe Park - playground equipment will be moved.
- Girl Scout Little House - Miller requested status. Director Kupper stated that the City has committed to the roof repair in an effort to convince the Girl Scouts to stay; however, he said the facility may no longer work for them from a programming standpoint.
- Workshop - Dey requested status. Director Kupper responded that a tour and workshop was being planned for sometime in February.
- Swanson Park - work has begun to cap the pipelines.

Informational Items

- Article entitled “RX for Public Parks” from the November, 2001 issue of *PublicWorks* magazine.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:35 p.m.

M.S. Mitchell, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary